

Pandemic – EBT (P-EBT) Benefits for Students during SY2020-2021

Frequently Asked Questions

About:

Below is a summary from the P-EBT Q&A issued by USDA on November 16, 2020. The full document can be found [here](#). This FAQ will be updated as further guidance is received.

What is the P-EBT eligibility criteria for school children in SY 2020-2021?

A school child is eligible for P-EBT when two conditions are met:

1. The child would have received free or reduced-priced school meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) if not for the COVID health emergency. This includes children who are directly certified, eligible by application or are enrolled in a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or Provision 2 school **AND**
2. The child does not receive free or reduced-price meals at the school because the school is closed or has been operating with reduced attendance or hours for at least 5 consecutive days in the current school year.

Are children who are enrolled in schools that are currently providing meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), rather than the NSLP, eligible to receive P-EBT benefits?

Yes. Children enrolled in schools that are closed or have reduced attendance for at least 5 consecutive days and are currently providing meals to through the SFSP instead of the NSLP and SBP are eligible for P-EBT.

Are children who are no longer enrolled in school and are being homeschooled because of COVID-19 eligible to receive P-EBT?

No. Children who are no longer enrolled in an NSLP/SBP/SFSP participating school and are being homeschooled are not eligible to receive P-EBT for SY2020-2021.

Can students who receive P-EBT benefits continue to access school meals?

Yes. Students that receive P-EBT benefits can continue to access school meals and are highly encouraged to do so. P-EBT benefits are intended to help with family's grocery bills and supplement the days in which students could not access school meals.

Are P-EBT benefits in competition with school meal programs?

Last updated on April 14, 2021.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

P-EBT Timeline

Spring 2020 Issuance



P-EBT spring issuance covered the months of March, April and May 2020 during SY2019-2020 and benefits were issued to students from July – September.

SY2020 – 2021 Issuance



Current school year issuance has not taken place and no action is required from sponsors or families at this time. CDE and CDHS are in the planning phase.

No. P-EBT is a supplemental program to assist families with their at home grocery bill. Sponsors should continue to promote their school meal programs alongside P-EBT. It will be important for sponsors to communicate to families that they are able to, *and should*, access school meals if they also receive P-EBT benefits. By doing so, families are helping support their school meal program as well as their local grocery community.

When will 2020-2021 P-EBT benefits be issued?

Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) are currently in the planning stages for SY2020-2021 P-EBT issuance. Guidance and updates will continue to be provided within this FAQ, in the DISH newsletter and on the [School Meal Eligibility webpage](#).

What items can be purchased using P-EBT funds?

Funds can be spent on eligible food items at many local retail stores, online retailers such as Amazon and Walmart, as well as farmers' markets. For a list of eligible items, visit the USDA Food and Nutrition Service [website](#).

Can P-EBT benefits be used with Double Up Food Bucks as well?

Yes, households can earn Double Up Food Bucks (also known as the GusNIP Incentive) and can make qualifying purchases using P-EBT benefits. For more information on Double Up Food Bucks please visit: <https://doubleupcolorado.org/>

When will 2020-2021 P-EBT benefits be issued?

The plan submitted to United States Department of Agriculture has been approved for SY2020-2021 P-EBT issuance and benefits will be issued retroactively for the school year during the summer months. P-EBT has also been extended to cover the summer months after the end of the school year. CDE and CDHS are waiting for further guidance on summer-P-EBT issuance. Updates will continue to be provided within this FAQ, in the DISH newsletter, the [School Meal Eligibility webpage](#) and the [P-EBT Data Collection webpage](#).

Call Center

A Call Center will be established around mid-May. Families will have the opportunity to dispute the allocation of benefits by contacting the Call Center.

All additional questions can be directed to: free&reducedpriceschoolmeals@cde.state.co.us



To learn more, visit:

- CDE, School Meal Eligibility webpage – <https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/schoolmealeligibility>
- CDHS, P-EBT webpage – <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/p-ebt>
- USDA, P-EBT webpage – <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-guidance-coronavirus-pandemic-ebt-pebt>